

CLAIMS

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

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a4-1 A table top having a plurality of leaf elements detachably connected to each other and lying in side by side relationship with respect to each other to form a generally continuous upper surface of said table top, said table top having a length, and a width, each said leaf element having a length, and respective first and second side edges, extending along the width of the table top, and a width, and respective third and fourth opposing end edges, extending along the length of the table top, said plurality of leaf elements comprising, in combination, interface structure on ones of said leaf elements for mounting said table top to a compatible table frame, each said leaf element further comprising at least one of a connector tab or a connector receptacle slot, disposed at an intermediate location on at least one of the first and second side edges, each said leaf element further comprising at least two of end tabs and/or receptacle end slots, disposed adjacent the opposing end edges thereof, the combination of said connector tabs in said connector receptacle slots and said end tabs in said end receptacle slots comprising tab-connector combinations which are effective to releasably join said leaf elements together in forming the generally continuous upper surface, whereby a force imposed on one said leaf element, including at a said end edge thereof, can be transferred to an adjacent one of said leaf elements through one or more of the respective tab-connector combinations.

2. A table top as in Claim 1 wherein end ones of said leaf elements have a first said side edge bearing said tabs and slots and a second said side edge free from said tabs and slots, and wherein intermediate ones of said leaf elements, disposed inwardly of said end leaf elements in said table as assembled, have first and second opposing side edges both bearing said tabs and slots.

3. A table top as in Claim 2 wherein said end leaf elements and said intermediate leaf elements are color coded to distinguish said end leaf elements from

said intermediate leaf elements, whereby said end leaf elements can readily be visually distinguished from said intermediate leaf elements, thereby to assist in assembly of said table top.

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4. A table top having a plurality of leaf elements lying in side by side relationship with respect to each other, and joined to each other, to form a generally continuous upper surface of said table top, said table top having a length, and a width, each said leaf element having a length, and respective first and second side edges, extending along the width of the table top, and a width, and respective third and fourth opposing end edges, extending along the length of the table top, said plurality of leaf elements comprising, in combination, interface structure on ones of said leaf elements for mounting said table top to a compatible table frame, each said leaf element further comprising structure assisting in effecting the joinder of said leaf elements to each other in side by side relationship, end ones of said leaf elements and intermediate ones of said leaf elements being distinguished by one of surface texture differences and markings molded into top surfaces of respective ones of said leaf elements, whereby said end leaf elements can readily be visually distinguished from said intermediate leaf elements, thereby to assist in assembly of said table top.

5. A table top as in Claim 4, including intermediate connector tabs and slots at intermediate locations of adjoining edges of said leaf elements and end tabs and slots at ends of said adjoining edges of said leaf elements, such that said tabs and slots, in combination, maintain a generally continuous upper surface of said table top.

6. A table top having a plurality of leaf elements lying in side by side relationship with respect to each other, and joined to each other, to form a generally continuous upper surface of said table top, said table top having a length, and a width, each said leaf element having a length, and respective first and second side edges, extending along the width of the table top, and a width, and respective third and fourth opposing end edges, extending along the length of the table top, said plurality of leaf elements comprising, in combination, interface structure on ones of said leaf

elements for mounting said table top to a compatible table frame, each said leaf element further comprising structure assisting in effecting the joinder of said leaf elements to each other in side by side relationship, end ones of said leaf elements and intermediate ones of said leaf elements being color coded to distinguish said end leaf elements from said intermediate leaf elements, whereby said end leaf elements can readily be visually distinguished from said intermediate leaf elements, thereby to assist in assembly of said table top.

7. A table top as in Claim 6, including intermediate connector tabs and slots at intermediate locations of adjoining edges of said leaf elements and end tabs and slots at ends of said adjoining edges of said leaf elements, such that said tabs and slots, in combination, maintain a generally continuous upper surface of said table top.

8. A collapsible table frame for supporting a compatible table top thereon, said table frame comprising:

- (a) a collapsible table frame body;
- (b) first and second pairs of frame top joints mounted for pivotation with respect to a top of said collapsible table frame body; and
- (c) first and second table top support arm assemblies, each said table top support arm assembly comprising a pair of table top support arms, first and second table top support arm holders, a support arm pillar for supporting the respective said table top support arm holders, and a pin connecting said top support arm holders to each other and to said support arm pillar, each said table top support arm on the respective said table top support arm assembly having an outward end extending away from said support arm pillar and an inward end proximate said support arm pillar, at least one of said support arms on each said top support arm assembly comprising a flange proximate the inward end of the respective said support arm, whereby when said table frame is set up, said flange abuts the respective said support arm holder.

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9. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 8 wherein said inward ends of each pair of said table top support arms extend inwardly to slidably connect through respective ones of said table top support arm holders of said table top support arm assemblies, wherein when the table frame is fully erected, the two support arms in each pair of said table top support arms are parallel to each other and the respective support arms in the pair, in combination, extend in a generally straight line between respective ones of the frame joints, and wherein bottom ends of said two support arm pillars are mounted for pivotation with respect to said collapsible table frame body.

10. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 9 wherein said table top support arm holders are mounted for pivotation with respect to the respective said support arm pillar thereby to enable said table top support arms to slide through said table top support arm holders.

11. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 8 wherein in order to collapse said collapsible table frame, each said table top support arm slides through a respective said table top support arm holder inwardly and toward a respective top joint, and rotates about a said frame top joint such that the inward end of the respective said table top support arm moves downward, with said table top support arm holders in each said table support assembly rotating in opposite directions as the respective said table top support arms rotate and slide inwardly and downwardly to a downward position as said table frame is collapsed.

12. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 8 wherein in order to erect said collapsible table frame, each said table top support arm rotates about a said frame top joint such that the inward end thereof moves upward and the support arm slides through a respective said table top support arm holder away from a respective top joint, with said table top support arm holders in each table support assembly rotating in opposite directions as the respective table top support arms slide outwardly and upwardly as said table frame is erected, sliding movement of said table top support

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arms being susceptible of being arrested by said flanges as said table frame reaches a fully erected configuration.

13. A collapsible table frame for supporting a compatible table top thereon, said table frame comprising:

- (a) a collapsible table frame body;
- (b) first and second pairs of frame top joints mounted for pivotation with respect to a top of said collapsible table frame body; and
- (c) first and second table top support arm assemblies, each said table top support arm assembly comprising a pair of table top support arms, a support arm pillar for supporting the respective said table top support arm holders, and a pin connecting said top support arms to each other and to said support arm pillar, each said table top support arm on the respective said table top support arm assembly having an outward end extending away from said support arm pillar and an inward end proximate said support arm pillar, said support arm pillar comprising a slot having a top, and extending along a length thereof downwardly to a bottom of the slot, said pin extending through said pillar at said slot, said slot further comprising a hook at the top thereof, whereby when said table frame is set up, said pin rises in the slot to a position adjacent the hook so that said hook can be placed under said pin thus to provide support to said pin and thus to said support arms while said frame is in the set up configuration.

14. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 13, wherein said hook has a downward ramp at the bottom edge thereof, so gravity or downward force on the support arms urges said pin to stay in the hook until such time as the load or other force is retracted.

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15. A table comprising a collapsible table frame as in Claim 13, and a table top comprising multiple leaf elements arranged in side by side relationship with respect to each other, the leaf elements having first lengths thereof arranged transverse to a second length of said table top, each said leaf element having opposing side edges, end ones of said leaf elements having a first said side edge bearing tabs and slots and a second said side edge free from said tabs and slots, and wherein intermediate ones of said leaf elements, disposed inwardly of said end leaf elements in said table top, have first and second opposing side edges both bearing said tabs and slots.

16. A table as in Claim 15 wherein said end leaf elements and said intermediate leaf elements are color coded to distinguish said end leaf elements from said intermediate leaf elements thereby to assist in assembly of said table top.

17. A table comprising a collapsible table frame as in Claim 13, and a table top comprising multiple leaf elements arranged in side by side relationship with respect to each other, including end leaf elements and intermediate leaf elements between said end leaf elements, said end leaf elements having a first color and color pattern, said intermediate leaf elements having a second color and color pattern different from the first color pattern, whereby said end leaf elements can readily be visually distinguished from said intermediate leaf elements, thereby to assist in assembly of said table top.

18. A collapsible table, comprising:

- (a) a collapsible table frame for supporting a compatible table top thereon;
- (b) a table top comprising a plurality of leaf elements detachably connected to each other in serial edge-to-edge relationship to form a generally continuous upper surface of said table top, said table top having first and second ends, and opposing side edges extending between the first and second ends, said table top, when assembled, comprising flanges

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extending downwardly from respective loci inwardly of the first and second ends of said table top and interfacing with said table frame so as to attach said table top to said table frame.

19. A collapsible table as in Claim 18, said flanges comprising apertures therethrough, said frame comprising support arms having studs extending into and through the apertures in said flanges, and extending outwardly from the apertures beyond said flanges.

20. A collapsible table as in Claim 19, said studs being extended as said frame is set up, so as to extend through the apertures in said flanges, and retracting through the apertures as an inherent function of collapsing said frame.

21. A method of assembling a table top to a collapsible table support frame, comprising:

- (a) substantially erecting the collapsible table support frame, including extending opposing table top support arms of a table top support arm assembly;
- (b) positioning the opposing table top support arms a minimal distance inward from a fully erected configuration;
- (c) aligning a compatible table top, having mounting flanges extending downwardly from a bottom of the table top, with outer ends of the table top support arms; and
- (d) extending the table top support arms into assembling engagement with the mounting flanges on the table top and thereby fully erecting the collapsible table support frame as the table top is being assembled to the table support frame.

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22. A method as in Claim 21, including apertures in the flanges, and including extending end portions of the support arms into and through the apertures such that the end portions extend outwardly from the apertures when the table is fully assembled.

23. A collapsible table frame for supporting a compatible table top thereon, said table frame comprising:

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- (a) a collapsible table frame body comprising first and second pairs of side legs and third and fourth pairs of front and rear legs, the legs in each said pair of legs being mounted for pivotation with respect to each other so as to cross while pivoting with respect to each other, each of said third and fourth pairs of legs being joined to each of said first and second pairs of legs;
  - (b) first, second, third, and fourth frame top joints comprising upwardly disposed portions of said collapsible table frame body, mounted for pivotation with respect to ones of said front, side, and rear legs; and
  - (c) first and second table top support arm assemblies, each said table top support arm assembly comprising a pair of table top support arms, each said table top support arm having an outward end disposed toward the respective said top joint and an inward end, the inward ends of said table top support arms being pivotally connected to each other at a pivot joint, and including a locking elbow bracket extending from the pivot joint to a respective one of said side legs between the respective said top joint and the pivot locus of the respective pair of said side legs.

24. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 23 wherein said locking elbow defines an acute angle of at least about 40 degrees with respect to one of said support arms



in the respective support arm assembly when said table frame is fully erected and said locking elbow bracket is locked.

25. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 23 wherein said locking elbow defines an acute angle of at least about 50 degrees with respect to one of said support arms in the respective support arm assembly when said table frame is fully erected and said locking elbow bracket is locked.

26. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 23 wherein said locking elbow defines an acute angle of at least about 60 degrees with respect to one of said support arms in the respective support arm assembly when said table frame is fully erected and said locking elbow bracket is locked.

27. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 23 wherein said locking elbow defines an acute angle of at least about 70 degrees with respect to one of said support arms in the respective support arm assembly when said table frame is fully erected and said locking elbow bracket is locked.

28. A collapsible table frame for supporting a compatible table top thereon, said table frame comprising:

- (a) a collapsible table frame body;
- (b) first and second pairs of frame top joints mounted for pivotation with respect to a top of said collapsible table frame body; and
- (c) first and second of table top support arm assemblies, each said table top support arm assembly comprising a pair of table top support arms, first and second table top support arm holders, and a support arm pillar for supporting the respective said table top support arm holders, each said

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table top support arm having an outward end extending away from said support arm pillar and an inward end proximate said support arm pillar, and including first and second slots on opposing sides of each support arm, extending from a first slot end proximate said inward end of the respective said support arm, and extending toward said outward end, each said table top support arm assembly further comprising a pin connecting said support arm holders to each other and to said support arm pillar, and extending through the slots in said support arms, whereby when said table frame is set up, said slots are adjacent said pin at the first slot ends.

29. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 28 wherein said inward ends of each pair of said table top support arms extend inwardly to slidably connect through respective ones of said table top support arm holders of said table top support arm assemblies, wherein when the table frame is fully erected, each pair of said table top support arms are parallel to each other and the respective support arms in the pair, in combination, extend in a generally straight line between respective ones of the frame joints, wherein bottom ends of said support arm pillars are mounted for pivotation with respect to said table frame body.

30. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 29 wherein said table top support arm holders are mounted for pivotation with respect to the respective said support arm pillar thereby to enable said table top support arms to slide through said table top support arm holders.

31. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 28 wherein in order to collapse said collapsible table frame, each said table top support arm slides through a respective said table top support arm holder inwardly and toward a respective top joint, and rotates about a said frame top joint such that the inward end of the respective said table top support arm moves downward, with said table top support arm holders in each table support assembly rotating in opposite directions as the respective said table

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top support arms rotate and slide inwardly and downwardly to a downward position as said table frame is collapsed.

32. A collapsible table frame as in Claim 28 wherein in order to erect said collapsible table frame, each said table top support arm rotates about a said frame top joint such that the inward end thereof moves upward and the support arm slides through a respective said table top support arm holder away from a respective top joint, with said table top support arm holder in each table support assembly rotating in opposite directions as the respective table top support arms slide outwardly and upwardly as said table frame is erected, sliding movement of said table top support arms being susceptible of being arrested by the first ends of the slots in said table top support arms contacting with the respective pins.

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